

In search of black women's history:

Accomplishments of women writers, educators, abolitionists often overlooked

by Jessie Carney Smith
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"We have many estimable women of our variety, but not any famous ones," the abolitionist and orator Frederick Douglass wrote more than 100 years ago. He was answering a request from Monroe Majors, who was gathering information for his pioneering book *Notable Negro Women*, published in 1893. Majors had asked Douglass, the most famous black man of his era, to suggest additions to the list of women to be included in the book.

In his reply, Douglass defined a famous person as one who was "celebrated in fame or public" and "much talked of." He cautioned: "It is not well to claim too much for ourselves before the public." Douglass continued in his letter, now in the possession of Majors' great-granddaughter Eleanor Boswell-Raine of El Sobrante, California, that he had seen "no book of importance written by a Negro woman" and that he knew "of no one among us who can appreciably be called famous." Obviously he dismissed Phillis Wheatley who in 1773 published *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* and was the first black woman and the second woman in America to publish a book of poems. It is inconceivable that Douglass considered unimportant the works of Frances E. W. Harper, writer and fellow activist, whose books included *Poems on Miscellaneous Subjects* (1854) and *Iola Leroy; or Shadows Uplifted* (1892); the writing of Frances

Anne Rollin Whipper, who in 1868 published *Life and Public Service of Martin R. Delany*; and the well-known Anna Julia Cooper, who wrote *A Voice from the South* (1892).

That Douglass could not recognize the fame of Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman, who doubtlessly were "much talked of" during his lifetime, causes further concern. Both Douglass and Truth were abolitionists and proponents of women's rights and had even appeared at the same gatherings

March is National Women's History Month. For more information on related activities and issues, see inside.

on occasion. In her work as underground railroad conductor, Harriet Tubman led over 200 of Douglass' black brothers and sisters from bondage to freedom. Refusing to

acknowledge that the lack of recognition for women reflected a prevailing male chauvinism, Douglass excused himself from expanding Majors' list and said that, while many of the women listed were admirable, "it does not follow that they are famous." Thus one of the nation's most renowned black leaders, Frederick Douglass, demonstrated a limited view of the importance of black women and passed up an opportunity to contribute to an important area of research—black American women's biography.

Thirty-three years later, in 1926, Hallie Quinn Brown published her seminal work, *Home-spun Heroines and Other Women of Distinction*. These biographical sketches of black women written by various women presented other notable black American women, who may not have been widely known. In one of these sketches, a biography of Elizabeth N. Smith, Maritcha Lyons called in question Frederick Douglass' advice "not to claim too much for ourselves before the public." In fact, Lyons pointed out that "we know so little about ourselves" that we have neglected our history and failed to preserve facts and incidents especially of those who "lived lives of strenuous endurance." Prominent in this category were black women. Since their story remained untold, many black American women, slave and free, died "unhonored and unsung." In the pre-Civil War era, black women founded schools and trained other young women and men who would, in turn, train others and become educators of renown. We also find among black

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Crusader for freedom



Sojourner Truth, 19th century abolitionist, women's rights activist and religious leader

Changing of the guard

Women students show new activism at first Feminist Expo

by Lynn Green

Is feminism dying?

Reports of the demise of feminism may be overstated.

Feminist Expo '96 in Washington, D.C. in February offered encouraging signs of a rebirth of the movement among a new generation of women, according to Nancy Ransom, director of the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center.

The presence of hundreds of students at the three-day expo was "the most important and unexpected surprise" Ransom encountered at the gathering, which was sponsored by the Feminist Majority Foundation and 299 other groups.

"I am encouraged that there is a younger generation who may or may not call themselves feminists, but who behave like feminists," Ransom said. She noted that the young women at the conference echoed earlier versions of the women's movement in their emphasis on helping others. "They were vocal about working for the poor and disenfranchised," she said. Social

justice and equal rights dominated the sessions.

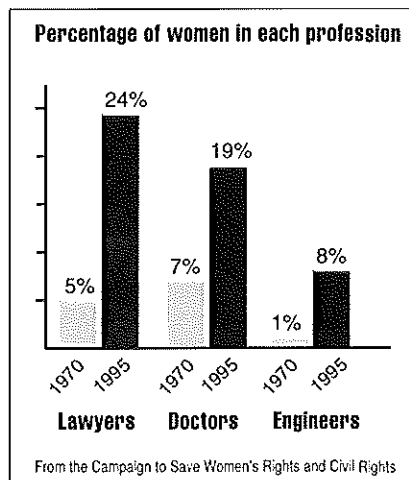
Although many of feminism's old-timers were in attendance — including Eleanor Smeal, Gloria Steinem and Molly Yard — one theme of the conference was that leadership of the movement was passing to the generation of students who thronged in the hallways and meeting rooms.

continue in the years ahead. "We want to reframe the debate for the 21st century," Smeal told the *New York Times*. Gloria Steinem warned a packed auditorium to stop reacting to opponents of women's rights. "We must go forward," she said.

Students were urged to inform themselves about crucial issues, including affirmative action and the federal budget, and to work on building coalitions among diverse groups of women. "Everyone made the effort to listen, to reach out, rather than grandstand," Ransom pointed out. "The prevailing mood was cooperative: 'How do we find ways to work together across the divisions of race, income, religion, region?'"

Economists who spoke at the conference advocated a better understanding of the federal budget so that women would be prepared to lobby for a "feminist budget" that includes emphasis on health care, education, and support for families. A recent *Wall Street Journal*/NBC News poll found men were nearly twice as likely as women to cite the budget deficit as one of the main problems facing the country, while women were far more likely to mention social problems like education and poverty. ■

Gains Made By Women



Gains have been made in many areas in recent years (see chart); however participants at the conference were reminded that women's active involvement is needed for progress to

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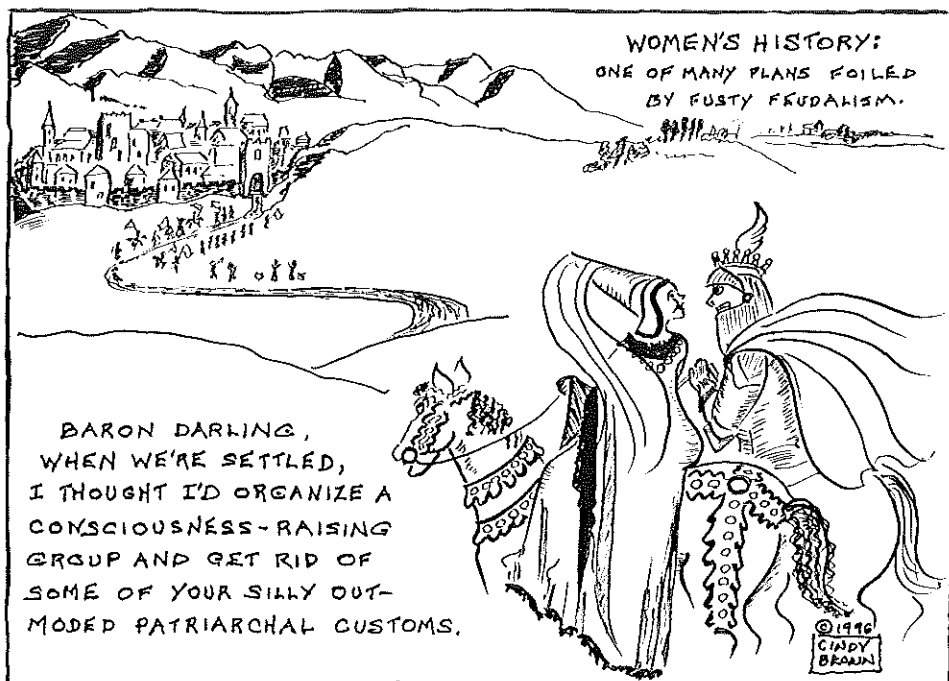
Cindy Brown, cartoonist

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Art exhibit held over

In honor of National Women's History Month, an exhibit of works by artist Susan DeMay at the Women's Center has been held over through March 29. DeMay describes her latest works as "part of an ongoing series of wall hangings that began over 15 years ago." The clay pieces have evolved from functionally-derived wall platters to more sculptural and abstract designs.



Teaching women's history:

Workshops help bring untold stories to light

For Nashville historian Carole Bucy, an interest in the women of Tennessee blossomed from a personal hobby to a cause that benefited hundreds of students and teachers.

Bucy, who now teaches history at Volunteer State Community College, has created a study guide and led dozens of workshops across Tennessee to help teachers include more women in their history curriculum.

"For so long, all of us just accepted what we were given as the full story of history," Bucy says. "A good example of that is Ken Burns' documentary on the Civil War. He had nine hours on the Civil War and he only had three or four women in there." Pointing to Nashville and its role as an occupied city, she notes, "Women were key players in the Civil War; they just didn't fight in the battles. That exempted them from the history books."

Bucy's workshops show teachers how to take the stories of women like Nancy Ward, a Cherokee leader, and incorporate them into lessons for elementary, middle and high school students. She says she has seen some improvement in recent years in the inclusion of women in history, particularly in high school textbooks. But in

Tennessee, as in other states, a primary concern for public school students is improved performance on standardized tests, and "there are not many questions about women on those tests."

She sees the inclusion of women in history as especially important to the self-esteem of young girls. "It's important for girls to see role models, to see women in their books that they can aspire to be like," Bucy points out. "It's sad to see girls' horizons so limited, that all they can aspire to is to be someone's wife or someone's mother."

Bucy's interest in the history of Tennessee women started when she took her son's third-grade class on a field trip to the Nashville city cemetery. She heard fascinating stories about women buried at the cemetery and started collecting stories and other information on Tennessee women. Soon she had filing cabinets full of local history, and later she began leading tours of the cemetery herself.

The Tennessee Humanities Council provided a grant that funded her 90-page study guide on Tennessee women and the 38 workshops for teachers she has conducted during the past four years. ■

Cecelia Tichi chosen to receive Mentoring Award

Cecelia Tichi, director of the American Studies program and William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of English, is the 1996 recipient of the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center Mentoring Award.

The annual award recognizes a member of the university community who fosters the professional and intellectual development of Vanderbilt women.

The award will be presented during a reception honoring Tichi at 5 p.m. March 27 at the Women's Center.

Other nominees for the Mentoring Award were:

- Associate Vice Chancellor Lauren Brisky
- Dr. Karen Campbell
- Dr. Alma Clayton-Pedersen
- Dr. Ellen Goldring
- Dr. Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey
- Dr. Ann Kaiser
- Dr. Amy-Jill Levine
- Dr. Billie Swalla

Women in the judiciary featured in March panels

The Women Law Students' Association is hosting a series of round-table discussions in March to commemorate National Women's History Month.

Three women from the Tennessee judiciary will speak on their experiences on the bench, in private practice and in law school.

Scheduled to speak are:

- Penny J. White, Associate Justice, Tennessee Supreme Court, Tuesday, March 12, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- Ruth M. Kinnard, of counsel, Stokes & Bartholomew, Tuesday, March 19, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Martha C. Daughtrey, Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, Tuesday, March 26, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

All sessions will be held in the Alexander Room at the Law School.

Black women's history, from page 1

women of that era concert musicians, linguists, and elocutionists. These women began a tradition of strenuous effort which continues to the present day.

For example, Elizabeth Smith, a 19th century educator, is an unsung exceptional woman. Lyons said conversation with Smith was "supreme" and continued, "She lived when conversation was an art." Smith read widely, was graceful, charming, and adapted herself to different situations. "She had the faculty of drawing out the best in each"; she was a good listener as well as good conversationalist. Her major claim to fame is heading the best school open to blacks in her hometown, Providence, Rhode Island, yet her reputation extended beyond that place. As a young girl, Lyons had met Smith, but even as she wrote, information about Smith was disappearing and Lyons could not give specific dates for her life and activities.

Lyons notes the work of black women throughout the country. She recognized African American women of the South who "fought the stars in their course, to step out of the dark-

ness of bondage into the light of personal liberty." She said those in the North and other areas "lived clouded lives, made dim by the tales of the indescribable sufferings endured by their sisters by blood and lineage. Their tears have flowed in sympathy and their characters have been molded by large sacrifices cheerfully made upon demand to alleviate distress which at best could only be surmised."

The history of black women in America is the history of such strife and success. Lyons' conclusion is a fitting tribute to black women profiled in two books by the author of this article, *Notable Black American Women* and its companion volume, *Notable Black American Women, Book II*, and other accomplished women not presented in these works. As Lyons said, "they all have done their duty, much better than they knew. They have left a broad foundation upon which their successors are obligated to raise an enduring superstructure of character, one that will exhibit the progress of the much maligned 'black woman of America,' and so conserve the toils, vigils and prayers of the many whose lives have been lived in shade, who

only in lives of others saw the shine of distant suns."

A century after Majors' pioneering biographical work and nearly seventy years after Brown continued the search, the history of black American women for the early period remains incomplete. In some cases it is still surprisingly difficult to find information about important contemporary and near-contemporary women. The series of biographical works called *Notable Black American Women* represents 25 years of research on the abolitionists, educators, doctors, journalists, writers, and women of other professions and spans the period from 1686 to 1966. The records of these women's lives clearly speak to Frederick Douglass and other nonbelievers, that there are "many estimable women of our variety" as well as famous ones. We all should take notice that black women are no longer footnotes to history or marginal notes that are pencilled in and left off when the manuscript is printed. ■

Adapted from *Notable Black American Women, Book II* (Gale Research, 1996)

“NEWS QUOTES”

...a compilation of news excerpts from the national press. Some stories have been edited for clarity, consistency or brevity...

Survey shows where women are closing the wage gap

In the 28 fields for which salary information is available by gender, women typically earn 85 to 95 percent of what men in similar jobs take home, according to an annual survey of wages by *Working Woman*.

Moreover, in several categories the

gap is far narrower, with women typically earning 95 to 100 percent of what men make in the same jobs.

"The 1980s were breakthrough years for women," says economist June O'Neill, director of the Congressional Budget Office. "And the gains are particularly impressive considering how little wages grew overall during the past 15 years." The result: Women are catching up. Finally.

Topping the list is college and university administration, where female deans and officers actually made more than their male colleagues in five out of 13 positions and between 93 and 97 percent as much as men in five others.

Still lagging in their compensation for women were the fields of veterinary medicine, health management and financial services, where women's pay ranged from 55 to 70 percent of men's.

Working Woman
February 1996

Equal opportunity recedes for most female lawyers

Despite surging numbers of female lawyers, bias against women remains entrenched in the legal profession and results in steep inequities of pay, promotion and opportunity, according to an American Bar Association panel's report.

The stubborn barriers faced by rank and file female lawyers are reflected in pay disparities at every level of experience and in all types of legal practice.

The findings fly in the face of a perception among male lawyers that the professional playing field has not merely been leveled, but has tilted in favor of women, who now comprise about 23 percent of the nation's lawyers.

New York Times
January 8, 1996

M A R C H

Please save and post. Individual flyers for these programs may not be sent.

March 1 (Friday)

New Work by Susan DeMay. Art exhibit held over for National Women's History Month. Exhibit closes March 29.

March 5 (Tuesday)

Creative Life Planning Group meets weekly to focus on ways to improve problem-solving skills and make life changes, noon to 1 p.m. *Also meets Mar. 12, 19 and 26.*

March 8 (Friday)

Brown Bag Lunch for Staff and Faculty. The second Friday of each month is designated as a time for guests to meet the Cuninggim Center staff and learn about activities and programs. Men as well as women are invited to bring a lunch from noon to 1 p.m.

March 11 (Monday)

Book Group meets to discuss *The Wedding* by Dorothy West. Facilitator is Terry Cowdrey. New members welcome. 5:15-6:15 p.m.

March 12 (Tuesday)

To Us at Twilight. Performance by artist Alyson Pou, 7:30 p.m., Sarratt Cinema. Reception to follow performance. Dresses and stories continue on exhibit in Sarratt Gallery February 28 through March 12. Co-sponsored by Sarratt Visual Arts Committee and the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center.

March 12 (Tuesday)

Proposal Writers Group. 4-6 p.m. For more information call Nancy Ransom at the Women's Center, 322-4843.

March 14 (Thursday)

Early Birds is a monthly informal gathering with continental breakfast and conversation for students, faculty and staff. Mark your calendar for the second Thursday of each month, 8-9 a.m.

March 18 (Monday)

Dissertation Writers. 4:30-6:30 p.m., Cuninggim Center.

March 20 (Wednesday)

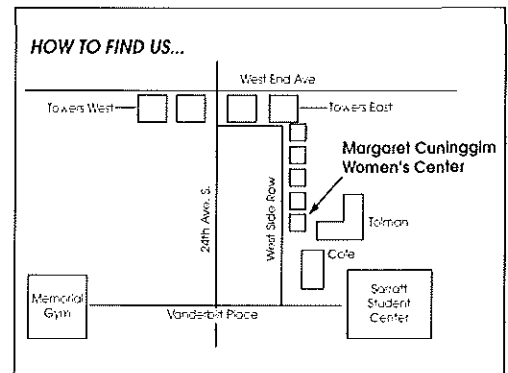
Two workshops led by Nancy Morgan Ronan. (See article, page 9)

"Thinking Back Through Our Mothers," provides an opportunity to explore the psychological experiences of being a daughter. 5-6:30 p.m., Sarratt 118.

"Towards Harmony: What's a Daughter to Do?" helps students enhance their capacities to explore and share with mothers. 8-9:30 p.m. Sarratt 205. Co-sponsored with the Cuninggim Center by Students for Women's Concerns.

March 21 (Thursday)

Twenty-Second Annual Antoinette Brown Lecture. "The Lady Vanishes: Dilemmas of Feminist Historians in the Age of 'Theory'" presented by Elizabeth A. Clark, John Carlisle Kilgo Professor of Religion, Duke University, is at 8 p.m. in Benton Chapel. Reception immediately following in Tillett Lounge. Free child care can be reserved by calling 322-4205 by March 14. Co-sponsored by the Office of Women's Concerns, Divinity School, and the Cuninggim Center.



Calendar of Events

Margaret
Cuninggim
Women's Center



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Unless otherwise stated, all programs are held at the Cuninggim Center, Franklin Building, 316 West Side Row. For more information, please call 322-4843.

Calendar of Events

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March 24 (Sunday)

Soaring Eagles: Women, Education and Leadership in Modern America. Lecture by Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, Phi Beta Kappa Annual Initiation Meeting. 4 p.m., Wilson 103. Co-sponsored by Phi Beta Kappa, Cuninggim Center, and Women's Studies Program. (See article below.)

March 26 (Tuesday)

Feminist Interpretations of Oklahoma with Susan Cook, musicologist, 4:30 p.m., Blair Recital Hall. Reception to follow. Co-sponsored by Blair School of Music and the Cuninggim Center. (See article below.)

March 26 (Tuesday)

Freelance Writers Group, a recently formed group of women writers meets 5:30-7:30 p.m. New members welcome.

More upcoming events during Women's History Month

Music to her ears: re-examining "Oklahoma"



Susan Cook

Musicologist Susan Cook will give a feminist interpretation of the Broadway musical *Oklahoma* in an upcoming visit to the Blair School of Music.

Her lecture at 4:30 p.m. March 26 in the Blair Recital Hall will take a new look at the familiar sights and sounds of the well-known play. A reception follows the lecture.

Cook, a captivating speaker and highly regarded scholar, will also address the Women and Music class at Blair, Room 222, at 8 p.m. March 25.

Her informal lecture on singer Billie

Holiday is open to guests, but seating is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Cook is an associate professor of music and women's studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is currently completing a Billie Holiday Reader for the Smithsonian Institution Press.

Historian to lecture on women and education



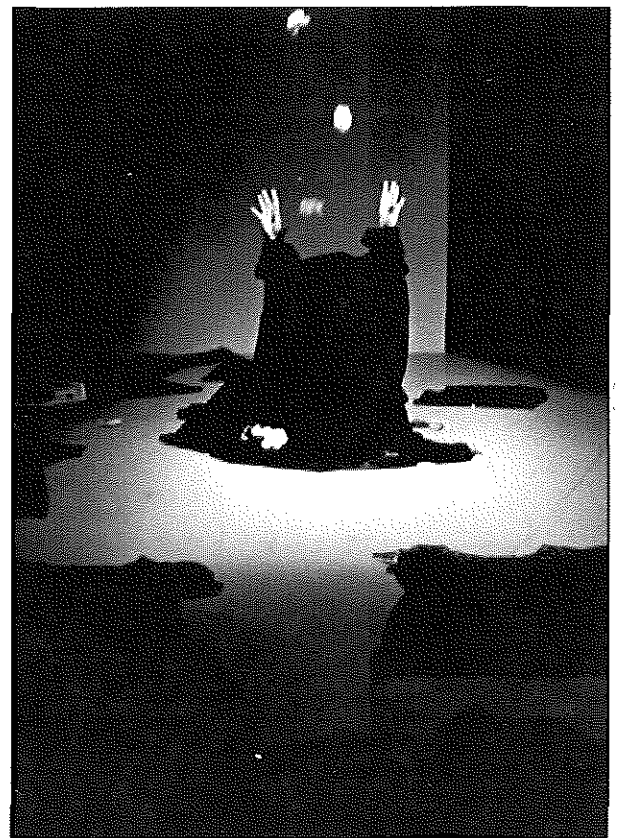
Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz

Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, professor of history and American studies at Smith College, will speak March 24 at Vanderbilt's Phi Beta Kappa initiation meeting.

Her lecture, "Soaring Eagles: Women, Education and Leadership," will be at 4 p.m. in Wilson 103.

Horowitz, who has written extensively on women's education, is appearing during Women's History Month and during Vanderbilt's Parents Week. Her speech is open to all interested members of the community.

In addition to her books on women's colleges and campus cultures, Horowitz has written a biography of M. Carey Thomas, a maverick women's leader and education advocate. (Her biography is reviewed on page 7.)



Performance art

Artist Alyson Pou uses a collection of black dresses to explore the heritage of gentility and madness handed down through three generations of women in her southern family. Her solo performance, set for 7:30 p.m. March 12 in Sarratt Cinema, is a collage of dreams, stories, objects and movement. The stories about her ancestors range from funny and eccentric to familiar and moving. Pou is an award-winning performance artist who writes, produces and performs her own pieces.

In the library...

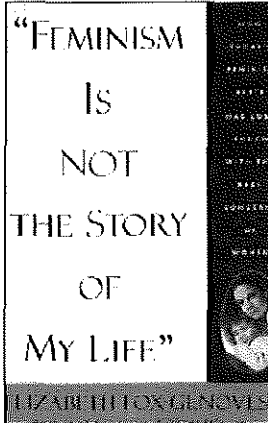
Evidence lacking in Fox-Genovese's attack on 'Feminist Elite'

Barbara Clarke,
Women's Center
librarian



"Feminism is Not the Story of My Life": How Today's Feminist Elite Has Lost Touch with the Real Concerns of Women (Nan A. Talese/Doubleday, 1996) by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese has generated some controversy. The writer, a well-known feminist and professor of humanities and history at Emory University, sought to ascertain why so many women today do not identify with feminism and feel that it has no relevance to their lives.

Fox-Genovese makes broad generalizations and exaggerated claims about feminists and feminist theory, without providing much supporting evidence. She criticizes the theories — as she interprets them — and shows how they do not apply to the women she interviewed for this book. These



women represent different age groups and come from a variety of backgrounds and areas. The writer admits that they do not constitute a scientific sample.

She feels that "the 'official' feminist movement does not have much patience for women who do not support every plank in its increasingly radical platform." While she disparages the "feminist elite," critics note that she has had a very privileged life.

Fox-Genovese suggests how changes in public policy could improve the lives of many families. She discusses feminist theories on motherhood, housework, abortion, marriage, homemakers and sexuality.

Pioneer in women's education portrayed

Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, who will speak at Vanderbilt on March 24, has authored *The Power and Passion of M. Carey Thomas* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1994). This is an impressive biography of an educator who was very well-known during her lifetime but who is now almost forgotten. Thomas was the first dean and later the president of Bryn Mawr College, as well as a founder of the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

Carey was born in Baltimore in January 1857, the oldest of ten children in a middle-class Quaker family. Her father was a doctor and her mother became a social reformer. At the age of 15 Thomas was sent to a Quaker boarding school for girls. After graduation she attended Cornell University, which had just begun admitting women students. She graduated in June 1877 and applied at Johns Hopkins University to do postgraduate work in philology. They were reluctant to admit a female graduate student and she was barred from attending seminars. She was not happy with these restrictions and withdrew a little over a year later.

Determined to pursue a graduate degree, she traveled to Europe with a close friend, Mamie Gwinn. In 1882 Thomas received her Ph.D. from the University of Zurich, one of the few universities that would allow women to study for a doctorate. Carey was the first woman to receive a 'summa cum laude' Ph.D. from that university; it was an honor that was rarely given to anyone.

Thomas had already developed a love of art and travel. She believed that education was the best way to improve the status of women. She returned to the United States, aiming to become the first president of Bryn Mawr College, a new school that was being established by a friend of the Thomas family. The trustees decided to appoint an older man to the presi-

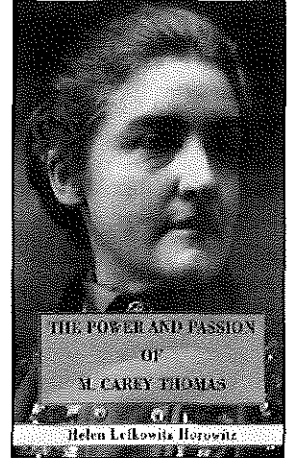
dency and Carey became the first dean and a professor of English. She moved onto the campus with Mamie, and in 1894 became the president of the college. Thomas and a wealthy friend, Mary Garrett, were instrumental in founding the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, which opened in 1893 and admitted female students on equal terms with men.

Carey was an energetic, enthusiastic, strong-willed teacher and administrator; she was also an elitist, a racist and a perfectionist with a sharp tongue. Though she remained outwardly a Quaker until 1927, she did not subscribe to many of their beliefs.

She frequently spoke about the advantages of higher education for women and some of her speeches were published. Under the influence of Mary Garrett, Carey became a suffragist and spoke at a number of suffrage meetings. After Mamie married in 1904 Mary moved into Carey's campus residence.

Thomas retired from Bryn Mawr in 1922 at the age of 65; she remained a life trustee and director. She was a strong supporter of the equal rights amendment in 1925. Garrett, who died in 1915, left her a large inheritance that enabled her to travel and live well until her death in December 1935.

For some time Thomas had been working on her autobiography; it was never published and only some parts of it are extant. Horowitz, professor of American history and American studies at Smith College, believes that one of Carey's sisters destroyed the other sections because she considered them to be shocking. ■





Health matters

Body image at Vanderbilt: two student views

by Christa McDermott
GPC '96

Everyone feels lonely or out of place sometimes. Yet for people with an eating disorder, a sense of loneliness, abnormality, and social isolation frequently seems heightened. These emotions are not only symptomatic of the depression that accompanies an eating disorder but may be a cause of or contribute to the disorder. Social support and acceptance are crucial to developing healthy self-esteem which eating disordered students lack.

At Vanderbilt specifically it seems incredibly difficult for many students to find the acceptance they need. Vanderbilt's social dynamics are mostly based on group identities (primarily

Greek, ethnic, and religious.) Opting out of group membership will quickly isolate many students. Outside of a few student government and Interhall functions during freshman year, almost all campus-wide dances, large parties, and social events are run by fraternities and sororities. Some other groups, such as the Black Student Alliance and the Indian Students Association, sponsor gatherings for distinct parts of the student body.

Vanderbilt is a campus divided along many lines in which too many students fall through the cracks. The lack of a sense of community has surfaced repeatedly in newspaper editorials and private conversations. And what community spirit does exist

often seems to be based on appearances.

Superficial appearances mean a lot at Vanderbilt, more so than at most other universities I've experienced. From dressing formally for football games to weeks of appearing spotless for sorority rush, being "seen" at the rec center or on the loop, to routinely "dressing for class" (a practice unheard of at places such as Penn State, where sweat suits and ponytails are more the order of the day than skirts, blouses, and makeup) Vanderbilt seems obsessed with appearance — as reflected by our manicured campus.

This emphasis on superficiality increasingly distorts reality for many of Vandy's eating disordered students. This is particularly hard on women, who bear a greater pressure than men to appear before they perform. As Pauline Frederick once noted, "When a man gets up to speak, people listen. When a woman gets up, people *look*; then, if they like what they see, they listen." Sometimes, it seems like this maxim could be Vandy's motto. And when combined with social isolation, this attitude can be devastating to an eating disordered individual already feeling unaccepted and unacceptable. ■

Search for 'Barbie doll' perfection can lead to painful battles over weight

by Laurie McClusky
GPC '96

Like most competitive institutions of higher education, Vanderbilt University attracts students who are successful and motivated, with a desire to be the best. Of the women I have known in my three and a half years here, most could be considered "perfectionists." They are concerned about good grades, which usually means all A's and B's if not straight A's, social involvement with the "right" people, and participation or leadership in important and recognized groups on campus. Overall, most women want to be the best they can be, and this usually involves surpassing others.

These desires hold true concerning

body image and weight as well. If women students were not already athletes in high school, they are soon caught up in the novelty of going to the rec center, where students flock after classes. There, students are easily intimidated by all the weight room

"In this ivory tower, beauty and perfection are the norm."

fanatics, who spend day after day working out. Many of these people are not undergraduates, but Vanderbilt employees or graduate students, who may have their own trainers. Even among fellow students and friends,

there is a need to do as much, if not more, than others. For many women, the desire to be the best, or at least comparable, soon comes to the forefront in the area of weight. Weight and one's body become things that can be controlled. Especially during college, when so many areas of one's life seem up in the air and out of control, this area of power can become addictive. Controlling the amount of time spent on the stairmaster is easier than controlling a grade on a test or the feelings of a romantic interest.

Because so many women work out constantly, the "average" woman at Vanderbilt does indeed resemble Barbie — at least much more so than in

continued on page 9

reality. Being constantly surrounded by other women eating fat-free food and making constant trips to the rec center can easily warp one's sense of what is normal.

Vanderbilt is indeed an ivory tower, in which one is set apart from reality. In this ivory tower, beauty and perfection are the norm. At the gym, many women run more than five miles a day, lift weights, and participate in any number of other activities. This is on top of the hours spent in class, at the library, and at various meetings for campus organizations.

In real life, people select what areas of interest should take priority for them, and participate mainly in those areas. At Vanderbilt, and perhaps at other universities, many people strive to be the best at everything, not in one area they have chosen to focus their energies on. Unfortunately, this takes an immense amount of effort and energy. Many women, because of unnatural body image ideals, try to do everything on a limited amount of fuel. In other words, women need to eat to get things done. However, in

Eating disorders: do you have one?

Among the indicators of a possible eating disorder are positive answers to the following questions:

- Do you restrict your calorie intake to less than 500 calories a day or skip two or more meals a day? Do you eat a very large amount of food within a two-hour period while feeling out of control?
- Do you eat large amounts of food when you are not hungry?
- Do you use laxatives, vomiting, excessive exercise, diuretics or other purging behaviors to lose or control weight?
- Do you stay at home or avoid social situations to maintain your eating or exercise schedule?
- Do you feel that food controls your life?
- Do you feel disgusted with yourself, depressed or very guilty after overeating?

New York Times
January 31, 1996

Vandy's ivory tower, eating makes you gain weight. Since so many women are in amazing shape, or underweight, eating makes women abnormal, at least in Vandy's eyes. Thus, many women don't get the fuel they need, but still try to do it all. The result is a body that is exhausted and starving.

For many women I know, the Vanderbilt environment — with its high

stress and unrealistic physical ideals — has been the start of a long and painful battle with food, weight, and oneself. ■

A campus body image and eating disorders group meets at 6:30 p.m. on Sundays, upstairs at the Women's Center. For more information, contact Christa at 421-6646 or e-mail mcdermic@ctrvox.

Workshops seek stronger bonds in mother-daughter relationships

Two workshops sponsored by the Women's Center and Students for Women's Concerns will give mothers and daughters an opportunity to explore and strengthen their relationships.

Nancy Morgan Ronan, a counselor, writer and teacher in Eugene, Oregon, will give the workshops Wednesday, March 20, in Sarratt Student Center.

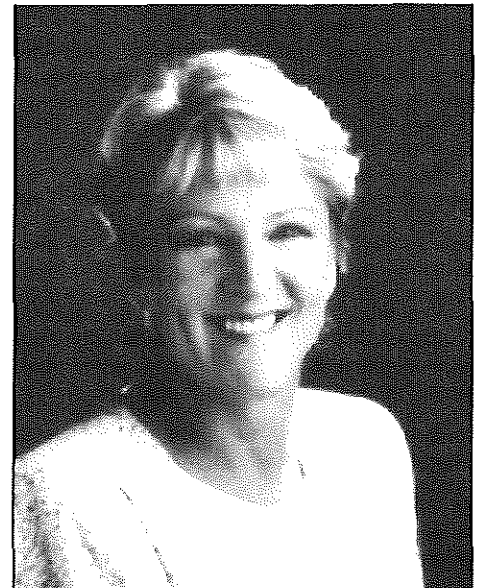
The first session, "*Thinking Back Through Our Mothers*," from 5 to 6:30 p.m., is aimed at faculty, staff and others in the community who would like to examine and improve the experience of being a daughter.

Ronan, who holds an M.A. in psychology from California State University and is an instructor at Lane Community College in Eugene, says

the program explores "the difficulties in creating and maintaining egalitarian relationships" between mothers and daughters. The workshop uses writing, drawing and visualization exercises to probe the myths and misunderstandings of the mother-daughter relationship.

The title of the workshop is taken from Madeline Grumet, who wrote in *Bitter Milk: Women and Teaching*, "What would thinking back through our mothers mean to us, we the women who educate? It invites us to recollect, to re-collect the process of our own formation."

The second workshop, from 8-9:30 p.m. is primarily for students seeking to enhance their ability to explore and share with their mothers.



Nancy Morgan Ronan

"Towards Harmony: What's a Daughter to Do?" aims to bridge the gaps that emerge when adult daughters try to create new connections with their mothers.

Announcements

Call for papers

Understanding Contexts and Healing in Communities is the topic of the third annual conference of the southern regional chapter of the Association for Women in Psychology. The conference will be Oct. 24-27 in Hilton Head, S.C., and proposals for papers, roundtables and workshops are due by April 1. The conference will be centered on issues related to women. Students not submitting papers are invited to attend the conference; student registration is \$45. For information, contact Dr. Rose Cleary, 404-818-6539.

Scholarships

Applications for the **Ada Bell Stapleton/Blanche Henry Weaver and Nora C. Chaffin Scholarships** are available in 220 Student Recreation Center, Sar-ratt Main Desk and the Towers Main Desks. The Stapleton/Weaver Scholarship, an award of \$1,500 provided by the Vanderbilt Woman's Club, is open to a rising junior or senior who is "an outstanding citizen on the campus." The Chaffin Scholarship is an award of \$2,000 given to a rising senior with service in student government, religious, literary and scholastic activities and in the arts. Applications are due in the Office of Campus Student Services by March 15.

Programs

Sexual Attitude Reassessment workshop, co-sponsored by the Center for Staff Development, Vanderbilt Medical Center and the Council on Human Sexuality, is March 9-10. The intense two-day program is for professionals who counsel clients about sexual health and also for couples seeking an enrichment experience. For information, contact Sharon Adkins at the medical center, 322-2081.

Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration will be June 23-July 19 at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. The residential program offers women faculty and administrators intensive training in educational administration. Applications are due by April 1. For information contact Lisa Zernicke at Bryn Mawr, 610-516-7325.

Etc.

Weekend of Women's Discovery is April 19-21 at Henry Horton State Park near Spring Hill. \$188.50 per person (double occupancy) includes four meals, massage session, two yoga sessions, two storytelling/sharing group sessions. Registration and full balance are due by March 15. Contact Tours by Design, 889-4159.

Call for Nominations for the Muliebrity Prize

In April the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center will recognize an undergraduate student who demonstrates leadership in activities that contribute to the achievements, interests, and goals of women and girls or that promote gender equity.

A cash award of \$100 and a certificate will be given.

Nominations for the Muliebrity Prize should be typed and not more than two pages. Describe the activities of the nominee that meet the criteria for the prize and send to Nancy Ransom, Women's Center director, by March 27.

Australia Down Under Adventure, April 12-28, is a special group tour for participants in the Sixth International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women in Adelaide, Australia. \$2,999 includes airfare from Los Angeles, airfare within Australia, all accommodations and visits to the Great Barrier Reef, Ayers Rock, Alice Springs and many others. Call 800-77-KOALA for information.



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